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## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REGARDING THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED DMHAS BUDGET

**FEBRUARY 23, 2017**

My name is Kevin Brophy and I am the Director of the Elder Law Unit for Connecticut Legal Services, a non-profit legal aid agency. My testimony is submitted on behalf of my low income elderly and disabled clients, and the many low income elderly and disabled residents of CT.

CT Legal Rights Project (CLRP) is a statewide non-profit agency which provides legal services to low income individuals with mental health conditions, who reside in hospitals or the community. The Governor's budget proposes to fund the CT Legal Rights Project (CLRP) at "consent decree levels." This is a cut that would eliminate or significantly reduce funding that supports CLRP's representation of clients living in the community with housing issues. I urge you to oppose this cut.

This cut will lead to some individuals with mental health conditions losing their housing and becoming institutionalized or homeless. This cut would work against the great strides CT has made in supporting individuals with mental health conditions living in the community and in alleviating homelessness. It is not only cost effective for the state to support individuals living in the community, it also promotes the individual's preference to live in the least restrictive environment.

Please reject this proposed cut to CLRP.

Thank you for considering the needs of Connecticut's most vulnerable seniors and individuals with disabilities.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin Brophy  
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